

International Advocate for Peace Award 2002



Melissa Stewart, Senator George J. Mitchell, John Wallach and Cynthia Devasia at the 2002 IAP Award Ceremony

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Opening Remarks

Dean Jackie Burt:

Good afternoon everyone. This award has come to represent a unique place in the heart of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. However, I think you would all agree that this year, and at this time more so than at any other time in the past, we truly need to recognize the international advocates for peace. Therefore, I would like to recognize, as they come in now, the distinguished recipients of the International Advocate for Peace Award, our distinguished students especially Melissa Stewart and Cynthia Devasia, and all the individuals who helped to make this Award possible.

This Award came as a student award. An idea of two distinguished organizations, the Cardozo Online Journal of Conflict Resolution and the International Law Students Association, who both said we want to recognize an important contribution on a regular basis. It is a distinct pleasure in the tradition of our two past recipients Richard Holbrooke, former UN Ambassador, and William Jefferson Clinton, former President of the United States, to bring before you today distinguished individuals and organizational recipients: George Mitchell, U.S. Senator, and John Wallach and the organization, Seeds of Peace.

As you hear their words and remarks today, think how fortunate we are to be hearing on this day, in this place, the most important message of all: Peace. It is with great pleasure that I bring to you now Dean Rudenstine and the recipients of the 2002 International Advocate for Peace Award.

Dean David Rudenstine:

Good afternoon and welcome. I want to welcome all of our students. I want to welcome our faculty and the administrators. I want to welcome our outside guests. I particularly want to welcome our honored guests, Senator George Mitchell, Seeds of Peace, and the President and Founder of Seeds of Peace, John Wallach. Today we are gathered to express our respects and gratitudes to our honored guests and to celebrate the award to them of the International Advocate for Peace Award. This Award was initiated 3 years ago by two Cardozo organizations – the Cardozo Online Journal of Conflict Resolution and the International Law Students Association. These two organizations conceived of the idea of the award and drew inspiration for the award from Associate Justice Benjamin N. Cardozo's idea of the centrality of freedom of speech in an ordered society.

The first recipient of the award was Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke and the second recipient was former President William Jefferson Clinton. Senator Mitchell is being honored today because of his work for bringing about peace in the international arena and Seeds of Peace is being honored today because it teaches young adults from around the world the tools and skills necessary to secure peace without violence. Real peace, true peace and meaningful peace, is more than the absence of violence. Peace that allows daily life to embrace the possibilities of hope, optimism, and love requires that trust, confidence, respect, tolerance, dignity, and security walk the land, permeate the society, and dominate the spirit of any one people. True peace is elusive. Once conflict engulfs it, bitterness, distrust, and violence replace the embrace and the handshake.

Those who put their lives in harms way are owed much by the society they seek to defend and protect, but those who devote themselves to the cause of peace also deserve and demand our gratitude, affection, and respect. The work that they do to resolve conflict, to spawn peace, deserves our greatest and most profound respect and admiration.

So, on behalf of the law school and myself, I would like to thank the honorees today for giving us the opportunity not only to thank them at arms length, but to thank them in person and to have the pleasure and the honor of being in their company. So thank you very much. (clapping and cheering).

My main assignment today is to introduce the folks who are going to introduce our honored guests. Melissa Stewart and Cynthia Devasia have been dynamos, powerhouses in this institution. This is an institution of bountiful opportunities and these two students have taken advantage of all of them. There is hardly an aspect of the law school that their lives have not touched. Whether it be the International Law Student Association, the Cardozo Online Journal for Conflict resolution, the new ADR organization, or the Cardozo Journal for Law and Literature. I could go on. I had asked them for a summary of what they did. They said they would give me a complete summary, but the list is so long that I do not have time in the few minutes that I have to go through it. I would also tell you that I had them both in Federal Courts last semester. They even found the time to come to class.

I know that in bringing about this event, they had the help of many people who are a part of the organizations that are sponsoring this event and, so to you as well, I want to extend my warmest and deepest thanks. I also want to acknowledge Professor Lela Love who is with us, over here on my left. Lela. (clapping). Both Melissa and Cynthia were founding members of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Society and that oddly enough ties in directly with the purpose of this award. Lela Love, as you know, directs our program, which is a nationally acclaimed program. So, on behalf of the law school and the Dean's office, I want to thank Melissa, Cynthia, Lela Love, and all the students who worked hard to make this event possible. So, before I sit down, again let me say welcome and thanks for being here. Let me thank our guests for allowing us this wonderful opportunity and let me welcome Melissa and Cynthia to come up here. Thank you very much.

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Senator George Mitchell's Acceptance Speech

Presented by Cynthia Devasia, Editor-in-Chief, Cardozo Online Journal of Conflict Resolution:

There are many words one can use when introducing the Honorable George Mitchell. One could refer to him by the various titles he has held: District Judge, U.S. Attorney, Diplomat, or Senator. One could also describe him in terms of his work: negotiator, mediator, author, or public servant. You could even describe him through words commonly used by his friends and colleagues: patient, trustworthy, and well-respected. But, perhaps the most enduring words that capture the essence of George Mitchell reflect his achievements in international diplomacy and dispute resolution. He is truly what can be described as an advocate for peace.

Imagine, if you will, a conflict between communities that have been besieged by centuries of tension and violence. A conflict involving religious, national identity, and economic issues, where one generation growing into adulthood does so knowing only hatred and fear, thinking that reconciliation is impossible. Now imagine you are asked to resolve this conflict. You are not sure if that is possible. You are not sure if there will be a resolution, and even if there is a resolution, you do not know whether it will last. But you do know one thing: you must at least attempt to solve it, you must at least take the first step. That is what Senator Mitchell has done in his illustrious career in international conflict resolution.

In 1995, while serving as President Clinton's appointed Advisor on Economic Initiatives in Ireland, [Senator Mitchell] was asked by both the British and Irish governments to chair the International Commission on Disarmament in Northern Ireland. Under his leadership as Chairman of the Peace Negotiations and guided by the Mitchell Principles of Democracy and Nonviolence, a historic three-strand multilateral agreement was reached by the governments of Ireland, the United Kingdom, and 8 political parties of Northern Ireland. The Good Friday Accord was overwhelmingly endorsed in a referendum by voters on all sides and, for the first time in thirty years, paramilitary organizations declared a cease fire. By itself, the agreement did not guarantee peace and reconciliation. But, in taking a first step, it made the chance for peace and reconciliation a possibility.

In mid-October of 2000, at the request of President Clinton, Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel, and President of the Palestinian Council Yasser Arafat, another first was achieved: Senator Mitchell agreed to serve as chairman of the Sharm el-Sheikh International Fact-Finding Committee. The goal of the committee was to examine the continuing crisis between the Israelis and the Palestinians, emphasizing the strong belief that the violence between the two parties could and must be brought to an end. That initiative was to serve not only as a basis to ending the violence, but to also rebuild confidence and bring the parties together. Earlier this week, Secretary of State Colin Powell acknowledged that the tenets of the Mitchell Plan, originally issued in May of 2001, still remain a viable basis for resolving the Middle East conflict.

Senator Mitchell's efforts to promote peace and dispute resolution in some of the most contentious conflicts around the world demonstrate characteristics that are the embodiment of a true advocate for peace: understanding, patience, commitment, perseverance, and the ability to handle adversity.

He understood the pangs of the age old conflict in Northern Ireland which had generated significant hatred between communities and an absence of trust. In his 1999 best seller, *Making Peace*, a personal retrospective of his role as chairman of the negotiations, he noted that if peace were ever to be achieved, there must not only be a decommissioning of the military, but a decommissioning of the mindset.

Senator Mitchell's patience remained steadfast during the peace talks when parties clashed so badly that at times they refused to sit in the same room or let alone talk to each other. Other times the parties grappled over the most preliminary and minutiae of details, once even walking out of the talks in protest of the Senator's chairmanship. Senator Mitchell, though, remained patient and the disaffected parties eventually returned to the table.

His commitment and perseverance shone brightly when he continued to chair the peace talks despite the fact that pessimism permeated the public sentiment in the face of continued violence. Senator Mitchell's conversations with the Irish people often began with compliments on his efforts and ended with despair about their prospects. "This conflict cannot be ended," and "we have been killing each other forever, and we are doomed to go on killing each other forever," were all common sentiments. However, they could not deter a man who once turned down the chance to serve on the Supreme Court so he could finish his work on comprehensive health care legislation. He remained committed over the 22 plus months of negotiations and persevered despite the fact that he suffered great personal losses in his own family during this time period.

Finally, Senator Mitchell is certainly no stranger to handling adversity. After all, he was Senate Majority leader for 6 of his 14 years on Capitol Hill. During his tenure, he gained the unqualified admiration of the American people and enjoyed the elusive honor of bi-partisan respect. He authored and played instrumental roles in the passage of legislation, addressing some of the nation's most pressing domestic concerns, including welfare reform, child care, toxic clean up, and civil rights for Americans with disabilities. His mastery of the art of coalition building at home lay the groundwork for his successful leadership and ability to handle adversity abroad.

In describing Senator Mitchell, it is hard not to mention the character of his convictions that have been the basis of his success in conflict resolution. He is a man who holds a deep conviction that there is no such thing as a conflict that cannot be ended. Since conflict is created by human beings, it can be resolved by human beings. He is a man who teaches that in the making of peace, the first thing you must do is expunge the word failure from your vocabulary. It takes perseverance. It takes patience. He is a man who claims not to have a magic wand, but too many times he has achieved the impossible and has taken that significant first step toward resolving conflict.

For his service in Northern Ireland, the Senator received international praise and numerous honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom (the highest honor that the U.S. government can bestow upon a civilian), the Philadelphia Liberty Medal, the Truman Institute Peace Prize, the German Peace Prize, the United Nations Peace Prize, and a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Senator Mitchell continues to practice law as Special Counsel in International Affairs for a Washington, D.C. based firm, serves on a number of committees and boards of several corporations, both domestically and abroad, including the Walt Disney and Xerox corporations. He is also Chairman of the International Crisis Group, a non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of crises in international affairs, and of the Red Cross September 11th Liberty Fund. Senator Mitchell is the author of several books addressing topics such as the Iran-Contra investigation, the threat of the greenhouse effect, and the fall of communism. He is supported in all of his endeavors by his loving wife, Heather, and his son, Michael.

The significance of conflict resolution is more important than ever and the current challenges facing our international community can at times seem daunting and hopeless. Yet in recognizing the vast contributions by peace advocates like Senator Mitchell, whose leadership has proven invaluable to the U.S. and to the world community, we are given hope that international conflict resolution is not just a cause but can be a reality. Therefore, it is with great privilege and honor to present to you the recipient of the Third Annual International Advocate for Peace Award: The Honorable Senator George J. Mitchell.

Senator George Mitchell:

Thank you very much Cynthia for your very kind remarks. Thank you ladies and gentlemen for all being here. This is a great honor for me. I was at one time a federal judge and anyone who has ever served or aspired to the federal judiciary must count among his or her heroes one of the greatest federal jurists in our nation's history, Benjamin Cardozo. So, to be invited to participate in a ceremony at an institution that not only bears his name, but has borne out the legacy of his greatness to achieve a wide-spread reputation for excellence, is for me a great honor. So I am grateful for that.

I am also grateful to share the award today with John Wallach and Seeds of Peace. You heard about them. You know what a wonderful organization it is and what great work John has done, all of which demonstrates his good judgment. But nothing demonstrates his good judgment more than the fact that the camps they run are in Maine. (laughter). It demonstrates that if you want a good setting to try to create good feelings among people, there is no place on earth better than the state of Maine. (laughter and applause).

Cynthia was nice enough to mention my wife Heather. I want to publicly thank her, as I have privately, for her support and understanding. We were married just as I left the Senate. I promised her that I was retiring from public life and would spend all of my time at home now. A week later I left for Northern Ireland. I really did mean it when I said it. It is just that circumstances changed. She was very kind, tolerant, and understanding in the many years that I spent in Northern Ireland and, later, in the Middle East.

Cynthia, that was a wonderful introduction. But, I want all of you to know that was part of the deal under which I came here. I was suffering through a period of low self-esteem (laughter) and was despondent, for reasons I will explain in a moment, when Cynthia called and asked me to come here. I said, "Look I will come if you promise to give me a long, excessive, false introduction." I am reminded of the old political saying: in flattery there can be no excess. So, she kept her part of the bargain.

Now the reason I was feeling so badly is that I had written a book on my experience in Northern Ireland, and I started out on a tour of the country to promote sales of the book. The first of them was here in Manhattan. There was a wonderful event with a huge card. They had a large photograph of me on the stage and the remarks were even more excessive than they were here today. On the way home, my wife said to me "I am really worried." I said, "why is that?" She said, "Well you are leaving tomorrow morning and traveling the country for two to three weeks. Morning, noon and night you are going to hear that kind of talk, and I am worried that you are going to get a swollen head by the time you will return home in a few weeks." I assured her that would not happen. I said, "Look I have been in politics for many years. Since I myself have introduced people thousands of times, I know how false introductions can be." "Besides," I said, "I am really rather modest." When people introduce me and list six or seven bills that I have been responsible for enacting into law, I usually think that they could have either eliminated half of them when they list these honors, or they did not need to mention them all. But, I set out across the country, and boy it was really, really excessive. As you might guess what is coming, I started to believe what was being said in the introductions.

My estimate of my own importance rose rapidly as I traveled westward across the country. I found on the third day that a fellow listed nine bills that I passed. I cited six more that he left out. I started lip singing to the introductions, awards that they had not mentioned and, by the time I got to a reception at an Irish community hall, I was very impressed with myself. I had a difficult time getting my head through the doorway. But, when I got through, the first person I encountered was an elderly woman who rushed up to me very excited, shook my hand vigorously, and said, "I want you to know I am thrilled to meet you." She said, "I have followed your career for years and I drove four hours to come here tonight just to shake your hand, to hear you speak." I said, "Well that's very nice of you, thank you." But, she said, "I must tell you I am very disappointed in one thing." Before I could respond, she said, "You do not look anything like your photographs." She thrust into my hand a large poster and said, "Here, see for yourself." I took the poster and looked at it. There, in the middle, was a huge photograph of Henry Kissinger. (laughter) [I said,] "I am not like the photograph because I am not Henry Kissinger." She said, "You are not! So who are you anyway?" When I told her she said, "Oh, I am crushed. I drove here four hours to meet Henry Kissinger and now all I have got is you!"

The next morning Cynthia called and I said, "Okay, I will come on two conditions: that you do not mention Henry Kissinger, and that you give me a really excessive introduction." I want to say that you are going to have a great career as a lawyer because you really keep your word. Thank you very much.

The theme of this award ceremony is peace. Therefore, I would like to devote the few minutes that I have to this subject. I began by noting to all of the Americans here, which I know roughly is most of the people around the room, that people around the world are inspired by and drawn to what they have come to know as American values. Not easily summarized but certainly they include the primacy of individual liberty, the concept of equal justice under law, and the aspiration of a fair chance for every member of our society. At the

same time, as is increasingly evident in recent weeks, many around the world disagree with some of our nation's policies. Others resent what they believe to be American exploitation or indifference to their plight. And there are those for whom the United States is an inevitable target for their rage, simply because of its place in the world. Throughout human history, there have been many dominant military and economic powers. Despite its initial distrust for foreign entanglement and despite the reluctance of our people, the United States, in the last century, has been thrust to the center of the world stage. That role brings with it enormous benefits and many problems. In this era of instant communication, every problem in the world is seen by some as an American problem. Every grievance, no matter how local, whether real or imagined, can be a cause for the resentment of the dominant power.

Recently, I was in South Korea. As you know, there are 37,000 American troops stationed there pursuant to a mutual security treaty between our two countries. The President and the Prime Minister told me that the government and the people of South Korea support the continued presence of American troops in their country. In the past few years, I have met with government and political leaders from every country in Europe, from Ireland to Russia, from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean. I asked each one of them this question: "Now that the Soviet Union no longer exists and Russia has withdrawn its military forces back to its national territory, do you believe the United States should withdraw its military forces back to the continental United States?" Without exception, the answer was an emphatic "no."

I referred earlier to dominant powers. But, I ask you to think back through history and try to recall if there ever was a dominant power with the moral authority that other countries around the world ask for its military forces to be stationed on their soil. Why is that? Obviously, part of that lies in the power itself. But, I am concerned that for many Americans, and especially young people who have never known anything else, power is perceived to be the exclusive basis of American influence in the world. I think there is more to it. While clearly important, power is in fact secondary to our basic ideals. Individual liberty, equal justice, and opportunity for all have been the primary basis of American influence in the world.

I ask you never to forget that the United States was a great nation long before it was a great military or economic power. When there were fewer than four million Americans clinging to the Atlantic seaboard, this was a great nation because it was ennobled by the Declaration of Independence and the adoption of the American Constitution. Those charter documents, especially the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution, are the most eloquent and concise statements of individual liberty ever written and adopted by human beings, at any time or any place. Now, whatever our country does, it must do so in a manner consistent with those fundamental values. We have tried to do that around the world in recent years. In Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, and the Balkans, our country has worked, imperfectly but earnestly, to promote peace and security with very limited success. In Northern Ireland, an unprecedented agreement was reached four years ago this month. When I announced the agreement, I described it as a historic step, for which it was. Despite many frustrations and setbacks in its implementation, impressive progress has been made. The rate of killing is way down. Commerce and growth are way up. The borders are open. The local government created pursuant to the agreement is functioning well. Recently, the Irish Republican Army engaged in a second major act of the decommissioning of its weapons. In Northern Ireland, the foundation has been laid for generations of peace after too many generations of war. And, despite the ever-present possibility of a resumption of war, a seemingly intractable conflict has proved to be practical after all.

In the Balkans, we were rightly criticized for the long delay between the onset of violence and our response. In that interim, hundreds of thousands of people were killed. However, once we acted, we helped to bring the violence to an end, and to replace a brutal dictator. Once again, however, a successful outcome is not yet assured. In the Middle East, we have had even less success. Despite an intense effort, President Clinton was unable to help resolve the differences between Israelis and Palestinians. Notwithstanding the current effort of the Bush administration, the tragic cycle of fear, hatred, and violence accelerates. We must not be deterred by the lack of progress. To the contrary, we must intensify our efforts. A resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the right objective for them, for us, and for the world.

Recently, I was asked the question: "Is world peace an impossible dream?" It may seem like the wrong time to talk about peace with the force of war filling the air. But, if we wait for the day that nothing bad is

happening in the world, we may never even get to talk about peace. So I would like to close with a few words on that subject.

If by "world peace" it is meant the complete absence of conflict among and within nations, then it might well be impossible. There are more than six billion people in the world. Current estimates project an increase to between eight and ten billion in this century with the largest increases to occur in the poorest countries. So, there will be a huge and rising demand for land and water, for natural resources of all kinds, for jobs and opportunities, for political and economic power. As the gap between the rich and poor nations widens, and as the technology of killing continues to advance more rapidly than almost any other human effort and spread to every part of the world, I think it unrealistic to imagine the complete absence of conflict. But, if we limit our definition to mean the absence of a major war and a containment of regional conflicts, that may be entirely feasible. The remarkable ingenuity of humans, especially of free men and women in a free society, has been repeatedly demonstrated. Throughout history, a negative forecast was always justified at any given point of time, yet progress was steady. I believe that the direction of human destiny is for more knowledge, more freedom, and more broadly shared national prosperity.

Just look at our own experience here in this country. The American Constitution, which I have already referred to, is one of the greatest literary and political accomplishments. And yet, great as were the men who wrote it, they were products of their time, influenced and constrained by the society in which they learned and lived. And so, our Constitution, which we rightly revere, limited the vote to adult white men who owned property. Black persons were not even considered to be persons under the American Constitution. It took seventy-five years, and the bloodiest war in our history, to extend the right to vote to all adult males. It then took another sixty years, and a bitter political struggle, to extend it to women. And, it was just ten years ago, within the lifetime of every person in this room, that Americans with disabilities were given the legal right to live full and meaningful lives. To this moment, the struggle goes on to expand our definition of citizenship, of the human and civil rights, which every American should enjoy.

Now what I have described is both a painful record and, at the same time, inspiring evidence of what is good about our country: A never-ending effort to right the wrongs of the past, enabling each generation to be more free and more prosperous than its predecessor. And today, we are more free and more prosperous than Americans ever have been. Obviously, what has happened here will not be precisely duplicated elsewhere, but we should be heartened by the knowledge that in a different way, at a different pace, the same journey has been underway in Europe, in parts of Asia, and in other lands. Not all, not evenly, and with many setbacks along the way, but the direction is right. This will be the first full century of American dominance in the world. It can be like so many in the past • a century of war, of famine, of oppression, and of injustice. But, it can also be a time when the dominant power uses its strength with restraint and commits its people, power, and prestige to a noble vision: A world that is largely at peace with education, opportunity, and prosperity extending to more and more people in more and more parts of the world. That is our challenge and let us make it our destiny.

I would like to address just a few words to the students here. You are the most fortunate people ever to have lived: To be Americans, citizens of the most free, open, and just society in all of human history. Imperfect as are all human institutions, but distinguished by a never-ending search to improve upon the past and to right the wrongs that become evident in our society over time. Of all of our citizens, you are among the most privileged. You are a very tiny elite of all the people who have ever lived. You have had an education, an opportunity that the vast majority of humans have never had and most of whom could never aspire to. Out of necessity, you will spend most of your lives working to earn income to support your family and to get your children, those of you fortunate enough to have them, off to a good start in life. I ask you to keep one thing in mind, and look at John Wallach as an example. You will find that no matter how much money you make and no matter how many possessions you acquire, you will still be missing something in your life if you do not devote a part of it to something larger than your self-interest, to a cause greater than your individual needs. Real fulfillment in your life will come not from leisure, not from self-indulgence, not from wealth or power. It will come from committing yourself fully, with all of your physical and spiritual might, to a worthwhile cause greater than yourself. I hope that each of you is fortunate enough to find that in your life. Thank you very much for being here.

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John Wallach's Acceptance Speech

Presented by Melissa Stewart, President, International Law Students Association:

I am honored to introduce a new component to the International Advocate for Peace Award. This year we decided that because advocates for peace have many faces and forms, we would recognize an organization whose mission embodies the values underlying this award. Seeds of Peace, an organization founded by John Wallach, which empowers children of war to break the cycle of violence, is exactly such an organization. Before today, many of you may never have heard of Seeds of Peace and the children who have been a part of it. After today, you will never forget them. Seeds of Peace is a non-profit, non-political organization that helps teenagers from regions of conflict around the world learn the skills of making peace.

How do they do it? They bring the teens to a camp tucked away in the woods of Maine on Pleasant Lake. The teens come from all over including Israel, The Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Qatar, Yemen, Cyprus, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, the former Yugoslavia (including Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo), Romania, India, Pakistan, inner cities here in the U.S., and next year they hope to have teens from all over Ireland. The teens arrive in Maine with baggage from home: distrust, anger, and fear. They arrive with the hope of creating a different future.

Set in the neutral, supportive environment of the camp in Maine, Seeds of Peace creates a community in which the youngsters live together, share meals, and participate in numerous summer camp activities. Many of them meet, for the first time, teens "from the other side," the so called enemy. These youngsters canoe, swim, and play sports together. They find creative expression through music, drama, and fine arts.

Though it is not all fun and games at the camp, daily co-existence sessions constitute the core of the Seeds of Peace summer program. Led by a team of professional facilitators, the sessions are designed to support the teenagers in building relationships based on honesty, understanding, and respect. It is here that the youngsters are given an opportunity to link their new camp experience to the values and relationships that defined their world before Seeds of Peace. It is here where anger is expressed, tears are shed, and hugs are exchanged. The sessions are designed to create opportunities for the youngsters to discuss the harder and more contentious issues, learn the communication skills necessary to develop a trusted peer group with whom they can recount painful memories, express pent-up anger and frustration, and search together for answers and new solutions to old problems.

Seeds of Peace is not just a summer camp in Maine. Seeds of Peace has a year-round program around the world. Their co-existence center in Jerusalem, bi-communicable workshops in Cyprus with Greek and Turkish Cypriots, who have attended Seeds of Peace camp, gather.

It is impossible to talk about Seeds of Peace without talking about John Wallach. Mr. Wallach is the founder and President of Seeds of Peace and an award-winning author and journalist. He founded Seeds of Peace in March 1993 to provide an opportunity for the children of war to learn the tools and develop the skills for a more secure future.

From 1997 to 1998, Mr. Wallach was a Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) that recently published his book, *The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience*. He is a teaching fellow at the Woodrow Wilson National Foundation. His awards include honorary doctorate degrees from Middlebury College and the University of Southern Maine, a UNESCO Peace Prize awarded in November 2000, and the prestigious Legion of Honor presented by the late Majesty King Hussein of Jordan.

In congratulating him, President Clinton said, "Your commitment to spreading the message of tolerance, justice and human rights has helped so many people. You have indeed planted the seeds for peace in the generation that will one day be leading our world."

From 1968 to 1994, Mr. Wallach was the Foreign Editor of the Hearst Newspapers that syndicated his articles through The New York Times News Service. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, he was seen regularly on PBS' Washington Week in Review, on many CNN programs, on NBC's Meet the Press, and other network shows. In 1980, he was named the BBC's First Visiting Foreign Affairs Correspondent and was a regular contributor to NPR, BBC, and CBC. Among the stories he broke during his journalism career are the Iran-Contra scandal – for which he received the National Press Club's highest honor, the Edwin Hood Award – and the CIA's covert mining of Nicaragua.

Mr. Wallach also received the highest diplomatic award from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, two Overseas Press Club awards, and the B'nai B'rith Humanitarian Award for helping to publicize the plight of Soviet dissents. He was the founding editor of WE/MBL, the first independent weekly newspaper in Russia, and was the creator of the Chautauqua Conference on U.S.-Soviet Relations, for which he received the 1991 Medal of Friendship, the highest civilian award, from President Mikhail Gorbachev. President Jimmy Carter also presented him with the Congressional Correspondents Award for his coverage of the 1978 Israeli-Egyptian Camp David Accords.

Mr. Wallach is co-author with his wife Janet, of three books: a biography, Arafat: In the Eyes of the Beholder, with a Foreword by Shimon Peres; Still Small Voices; and The New Palestinians. The Wallachs have two sons, David and Michael.

As a journalist covering the Middle East, Mr. Wallach saw only a continuous cycle of anger and violence. The leaders who were negotiating different peace agreements that met for the first time did not trust each other. They did not respect each other. He realized that they could not because they did not even know each other.

At the height of his impressive career as a journalist, he gave it all up to start Seeds of Peace. He dared to give the youth of nations in areas of conflict the tools necessary to imagine and create a future different than today. He dared to offer the leaders of tomorrow the ability to give peace a chance.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a privilege to present the Organization Award of the Third Annual International Advocate for Peace Award to Seeds of Peace, John Wallach, and two Seeds who you will hear from today, Eli Steinberg and Laith Khouri.

John Wallach, Founder, Seeds of Peace:

Thank you very, very much for that kind introduction. I was not sure that I recognized who it was about, but I was delighted to hear such wonderful things about myself. (laughter) I want to thank Dean Rudenstine, Lela Love, and all of those who have made this special effort to be here today to honor Senator Mitchell and myself. I feel humbled to be in the presence and company of Senator Mitchell because he is truly one of the great Americans of our time and there are not very many. I think his passion, devotion, and commitment to working for peace among the world's leaders is second only to the difficulty of working for peace with the young people we work with. I salute him. (applause)

Let me tell you a little about Seeds of Peace and how it began. I am going to try to keep my remarks fairly short because I want to hear from Laith and from Eli.

I really had the idea for Seeds of Peace back in 1993 after the first bombing of the World Trade Center. I was still a journalist and it was February 1993, and I asked myself a very simple question: What are the terrorists trying to do? The answer was very simple. They were trying to instill fear. They have always tried to instill fear and to paralyze the majority, to paralyze all of us into inaction. Was there something that could be done to counter this? It seemed to me that what we had to do was to come up with something that would inspire

hope. If terrorists are trying to instill fear, if we inspire hope by mobilizing the majority, we could make a dent in achieving greater justice in the world.

At a dinner party in Washington, DC, in March 1993 given in honor of Shimon Peres, who was the Foreign Minister and is again the Foreign Minister of Israel; Ahmed Maher, who was the Egyptian Ambassador, now the Egyptian Foreign Minister; and Hassan Abu Rahman, who was the Palestinian PLO representative at the time, who today is the Palestinian envoy to Washington. I asked the hostess if I could make a toast. I stood up and I said, "I would like this summer for each of your governments (actually the PLO did not have a government then) to send a youngster to a summer camp in Maine that my son Michael had gone to." It used to be called Camp Powhatten, on the shores of Pleasant Lake in Otisfield, Maine. I said, "if you would each send me fifteen kids, I would like to see what we can do." Being very courteous, Shimon Peres first said, "of course we will, John. We have known you for years, we trust you." The Egyptian Ambassador, not wanting to be embarrassed by the Israeli counterpart said, "of course, we will do the same." The Palestinian said the same, "we will do the same." But I did not want to take a chance. So, the next morning I called a news conference and I announced that Egypt, Israel, and the PLO had agreed to send forty-five kids to a summer camp in Maine. That was the first summer and it was a tough summer.

To just give you a comparison between then and now, we were forty-five or forty-six kids in 1993 from three different parts of the world – Egypt, Palestine, and Israel. Today, we have twenty-two countries, between 400 and 500 youngsters that come to Seeds of Peace every summer. We have India, Pakistan, and, this summer for the first time, Afghanistan. [We have] 2,000 graduates, almost 100 of whom are now enrolled on scholarships at some of the most prestigious colleges and universities all over the United States. So, we think of ourselves as a leadership track training program. We hope we are developing the leaders of tomorrow. They are thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen years of age when they came to us. They are now today in their early 20s.

There was a marvelous piece on Nightline a few weeks ago, in which one of the former Seeds said he had once felt compelled as a Palestinian young man to go to a rock throwing demonstration. He picked up the rock and he could not throw it because he remembered he was a Seed and he put down the rock. The headlines tell of a great deal of hatred and violence these days, of kids who are sacrificing themselves, their lives, their bodies strapped with explosives to seek vengeance. Nothing but pure hatred. There is a silent majority that does not accept that way. I would say that they are not so silent because they are Seeds.

They come every summer, and we will have another Palestinian delegation and Israeli delegation this summer. They are brave and courageous young men and women because they have to go home and face the threats and condemnation of their peers. One young Palestinian told [of a time that] he was sitting on his computer corresponding on e-mail with an Israeli friend when a member of the Tanzim broke into his house and put a gun to his head and said, "You get off that computer with that Israeli." He refused and he threw the fellow out of his house and redoubled his efforts to keep in contact with his Israeli friend.

There are countless stories of bravery and courage on an individual basis that never get reported. Just two weeks ago in Jerusalem, General Zinni [came to] our Center in Jerusalem – we have a 5,000 square foot Center. Until the latest round of fighting, we were bringing Israelis and Palestinians together on a regular basis. General Zinni met with thirty-six Israelis and Palestinians and their families. In the midst of all this violence and all this hatred and suicide bombs and everything else, here you had eighteen Israeli families and eighteen Palestinian families coming with their sons and daughters in order to be with each other and to hear what General Zinni had to say and to ask him questions. General Zinni spent an hour and a half with these youngsters, taking their questions and responding to them. Was that reported in the media? Unfortunately, no.

Seeds of Peace has a mission. It is to provide a ray of hope in the midst of this horrible cycle of violence, which seems unending. We exist for perhaps one purpose above all else, and that is to humanize conflicts that have been deliberately dehumanized by governments in order to perpetuate those conflicts. The dehumanization today has reached an unparalleled level. If one thinks about the image of a suicide bomber strapped with explosives, if one thinks about Israeli forces blowing up homes, kicking people out of their

houses, destroying their possessions, all the possessions they have, tanks rumbling through refugee-camp streets, the little that they had being destroyed. How can one reach a lower level of dehumanization than that? In fact, if one thinks of the uniform which soldiers wear, whether they are Israeli soldiers or others, or the uniforms that Palestinian Fedayin or guerilla fighters wear, the kafir, the black and white kafir wrapped around their face – it is the ultimate sign of dehumanization because in order to kill our enemy, we have to dehumanize them first.

Seeds of Peace exists in order to reverse that process. We are a drop in the bucket – 2000 kids in ten years and we will have 400 or 500 this summer. We exist in order to roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty and make real peace in the real world. That is not an easy thing. We do not plant a tree and call it Peace. We do not sing a song and join hands and call it Peace. We are not Make-Love-Not-War. We are not some 1960s left-wing organization that believes that all you have to do is smile for the camera and hold hands and that tomorrow will be a new day. No, we believe that making Peace is very hard and that making Peace requires co-existence. Not necessarily liking one another, but agreeing to co-exist. I tell youngsters two things at camp during the summer. One is that Peace has to be as Dean Rudenstine said, “more than the absence of war.” It has to be something that you are really willing to fight for and willing to celebrate. And one of the things we try to do at camp during the summer is to come together as a community and create something among ourselves that is very precious and that we are all willing to try to preserve when we go home. Two, Peace is also a very emotional and difficult thing to achieve in the real world because we may not like each other.

In the three and a half weeks (we have three sessions during the summer), we frequently find in the second week – after the kids come bright-eyed, feeling that they are going to do a better job than their parents did, that we are going to make Peace, that we have been chosen by our Governments to be part of Seeds of Peace, and, suddenly, in the second week the dissolution sets in. They come and they tell us, “we really do not like the enemy. I know we are supposed to like, but they are saying terrible things and [it is] very upsetting. You know we are really beginning to find out that maybe our parents were right: maybe they are the enemy.” We say, “that is okay. Let it out, let your real feelings come out.” One girl, an Indian girl, came out of the co-existence session last summer and said, “I did not know I had so much hate.” That voyage of self-discovery is one that goes on in the co-existence sessions on a daily basis.

I walked into a session a couple of years ago and everybody – all of the Israelis and all of the Palestinians and Egyptians – were crying like babies. I felt like I was at a funeral. This was perhaps one of the most depressing things I had ever seen in my life. And then I realized that it was not. It was one of the most hopeful things that I had seen because here were people who perceived each other as enemies, unafraid to share the most noble human emotion of all – the courage to appear weak in front of your enemies and to cry. I have never gotten over that because I thought it was such a remarkable thing to create something that you want to preserve, you want to share. We do not spare any emotion.

The youngsters discover they have different histories. They have been taught different facts. They sometimes act like they do not like each other very much. But you do not have to like each other to make peace. You have to co-exist. The British and the French do not like each other very much, but they manage to co-exist. Somehow, that is what we are striving for. We are not striving for some new universe in which it is Make-Love-And-Not-War. Love is a word you do not hear too much at Seeds of Peace. What we want is understanding.

Understanding and trust – those are things that are missing in the Middle East. Beyond everything, what we want is humanization, to try to humanize the process that has been so badly and tragically dehumanized, intentionally and deliberately, by both governments in the case of the Middle East and in other parts of the world, in order to perpetuate the cycles of conflict and in order to justify the killing of the faceless enemy. I could stand here for another twenty or thirty minutes and tell you all kinds of stories. I wish I had the time, but I do not want to take up the time of the two young Seeds who have come here today – Eli from Israel, Laif who is a Palestinian from Jordan. Which of you are going to start first? I would like to introduce Eli Steinberg from Israel.

Eli Steinberg, Seed, Seeds of Peace:

Thank you very much. My name is Eli. I am an eighteen year old. I live in Haifa, in Israel. Haifa is a mixed city where Arabs and Jews live together.

Three years ago, before I came to Seeds of Peace (I joined Seeds of Peace in 1999), I used to know very little about my neighbors, about the people who live right next to me in my city, in my house, in my neighborhood. Seeds of Peace gave me the opportunity to look them in the eyes and understand them. When you understand someone, when you sit in front of him, and look him in the face and talk to him, you cannot think of him as the enemy. There is simply no such thing.

Each day of this terrible conflict, of the latest outburst, that has been going on for almost two years, each day, Seeds of Peace gives me hope. Seeds of Peace gives me an optimistic view of the future because I know, like John said, there is a minority of violent people who convince other people to be violent and to hate us. But, I know there is a silent majority, and this silent majority are my friends: my Palestinian friends, my Jordanian friends, and my Egyptian friends. Although I cannot visit them right now, because it is too dangerous for me and it is too dangerous for them to visit me right now, we still keep in touch. We write e-mails and talk on the phone. Every time something happens in my city or in any other big city in Israel, what gives me comfort and gives me hope is to get a phone call from my Palestinian friends asking how I am doing, am I okay, did something happen to anyone I know. Fortunately enough for me, I have not lost anyone close in this conflict yet. But, I am afraid this might happen and I think what will give me hope is this contact. I know that I have someone to talk to on the other side.

Three years ago on Christmas Eve, the last Christmas of the Millennium (it was a happier time then), we all went to celebrate Christmas in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, on the 24th. We went in a large group of Israelis, about 50 people. We met with our Palestinian friends in Bethlehem at the same place, which is now the scene of a terrible battle that has been going on for a couple of weeks now, the Church of the Nativity and the compound. Looking at the news today, I cannot even imagine I was there just three years ago, just three short years ago. It was so beautiful. It was full of light, it was full of happy people, full of people smiling. Arabs, Jews, Israelis, Palestinians just walking together, holding hands, singing, and dancing to Christmas songs. Today, it is just so terrible. None of it is how I remember it just three years ago. Still, like I said before, the hope is there. The situation is very bad, but we have each other. We keep in touch. We do not hate each other. We do not have any reason to do so because we know each other too well to do that.

To put a face on the enemy, to see him, to know him – that is what is important. That is why I wish more people could come through this program or any other program, which will introduce them to the enemy to show them the enemy has a face. It will show them that the enemy is not just a bad person that hates you. They are people just like you but on the other side, and that is what is important. It is what gives me hope in this terrible situation. Thank you very much.

Laith Khouri, Seed, Seeds of Peace:

He did not leave anything for me to say, so I am going to be brief. I am Laith from Jordan. I do not live in the capital Amman. I live in a city called Erbic. I heard about Seeds of Peace from my cousin who did Seeds of Peace before me. He was so hyper when he told me about Seeds of Peace. I was like, "Okay I am going to try it." Before that, I was so interested in the cause, because I am originally from Palestine. So, I went to Seeds of Peace, first, in the summer of 2000.

When I reached Maine, I was extremely tired from the trip, but my mind was working. [I thought] am I going to meet the other side, because I had never met an Israeli before in my life. We met each other in the bunk. The first few days, I was so nervous – he was my enemy. I discovered that my enemy is a human being like me. He is not even an enemy. He is now my best friend. We lived together, ate together, swam together, played sports together, and had sessions with each other. We tried to understand each other and we did. We understood each other from all points of view. Even though we disagreed a lot with each other, at the same time, we really understood each other.

That was my first time in 2000. In 2001, I came again after the second Intafada, which really destroyed a lot of lives. When I came there, I was so angry because of the situation that was going on. I wanted to suppress my feelings to say that what was going on was wrong. I am not justifying suicide bombers. I am not saying that Israelis are doing something wrong. Both sides are doing something wrong. Everybody is being killed by Palestinians. At the same time, suicide bombers are killing themselves and Israelis. They are killing everybody. They do not even know if they are killing Israelis or just Palestinians. I came here just to suppress my feelings and to say that we can do something now. We are simple peacemakers, not just followers of peacemakers, but peacemakers. We are the ones who make peace. I said that we can do something. We are not here just to see each other and have fun. We are here to achieve peace through Seeds of Peace. Seeds of Peace, at the time, taught us how to discuss, how to understand, and how to know who is your enemy.

I thank John and all the staff for giving us the opportunity. This opportunity is so important for every single person in that conflict to understand what is going on. He gave us this opportunity, and we are so thankful for that, for him, for the whole staff – for the facilitators who have really been trying to make us closer to each other and for the counselors who have been with us the whole time, just trying to make us have a life together. Now, we are in touch with each other. We go to the Seeds Net, we write our e-mails, and we call each other everyday. I receive phone calls from all my Israeli friends every single day. We are really in touch. Even though it has been ages since we have seen each other, we still have that hope. We have that hope that Seeds of Peace gave us.

Now, I would like to say my feelings about the current situation. It is really, really hard to understand how I can imagine that my Israeli friend or Palestinian friend is going to be killed. I cannot even weigh that moment. I cannot even imagine my friend would be killed, or even injured, because of a war going on. It must be stopped. The leaders of the world have been working for a long time. I am sure, because I have hope, that a solution will be found to solve this problem. A lot of lives are gone.

My plans for the future: as of now, I am a freshman studying political science at Manhattanville College. I think when I graduate, I will be someone who works for peace; someone who might work with Seeds of Peace, or who might work in the Parliament, or hopefully, my dream, in the United Nations. I will try to find a solution, not just for the Middle East problem, but for all conflicts in the world. I will try to solve these problems because that is what Seeds of Peace taught us. Seeds of Peace taught us how to be ourselves, how to achieve peace, and that is why we are here today. Maybe to give someone hope that the problem is going to be solved. Thanks.